

# Take a Good Hard Look At Yourself

Before putting yourself on the job market, before filling out a single employment application, and even before you begin putting together a resume, you must do something that many of us find very difficult. You must take an honest and objective look at yourself. Even if you've never had a job before, you have unique abilities to offer.

Identify your strengths and think about what you want in a job. Employers are far too busy to figure out what job is best for you, and your friends and relatives aren't very objective. Only you can fully analyze your own abilities. For starters, consider the following, not just in terms of job skills, but overall:

- What is it that you most enjoy doing?
- What are you best at?
- What do you avoid doing?
- What satisfies you most?

## Do you prefer:

- Working with others or working alone?
- Fast-paced and spontaneous work?
- Quiet and predictable work?
- Security (steady wage)?
- Risks (earning commissions)?
- Flexibility with work hours, location, travel?

Once you've identified your strengths and preferences, think about what kinds of jobs use those talents and the types of businesses that appeal to you most. For example, if your greatest happiness comes from reading murder mysteries, you might consider exploring jobs in police work, security or at a tourist spot offering special "murder-mystery" packages.

Look through a city's yellow pages or a business directory at the library to identify potential employers, or consult a career counselor to help identify jobs best suited to you.

## When looking for a new job contact, try:

- Employment agencies.
- Employers.
- Family, friends and neighbors.
- Teachers.
- Guidance Counselors.
- School placement office.
- Others (health club, synagogue, organizations).
- Community service programs (for women, youth or disabled persons).

Don't forget to use resources that list job openings such as newspapers, bulletin boards and Internet sites.

Source: Nebraska Careers and Education 2002

# Interviewing

## Essentials to help you have a successful experience

When reporting for a job interview, or applying in person, be well prepared by taking along the following items:

- Good pencil, eraser and black pen.
- Small writing pad or notebook.
- Copies of your resume.
- Prepared sheet of references.
- Birth certificate and social security card.
- Licenses and/or work permit, if applicable.
- Work samples or your portfolio, if applicable.
- Breath mints, a comb or brush, anything to help you feel comfortable and prepared.

Some tips to keep in mind:

## DO:

- Arrive alone, 10 to 15 minutes early.
- Be prepared mentally.
- Shake hands firmly.
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
- Act as natural as possible, even though you may be nervous.
- Maintain good posture and body language.
- Know something about the company.
- Focus on what you have to offer rather than what you want.

- Have a positive attitude.
- Take time to collect your thoughts, then answer clearly, concisely, and honestly.

- Thank your interviewer(s) before leaving

## DON'T:

- Don't chew gum or smoke.
- Don't discuss personal, domestic or financial problems.
- Don't criticize former employers or co-workers.
- Don't ask about pay or benefits. Let the interviewer bring it up when appropriate.
- Don't take along a pager, cellular phone or other device that could interrupt the interview.
- Don't sell yourself short but don't exaggerate.
- Don't forget to send a thank-you note following the interview.

## Be ready to answer questions like:

- What interests you about the job?
- Why should I hire you?
- What are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?

- What is your greatest accomplishment?
- How do you handle pressure?
- Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?
- How would you describe yourself?
- What can you contribute to our organization?
- What are your career goals?

## Questions to ask:

- What are the job duties for this position?
- What are you looking for in the person you hire for this position?
- What opportunities exist for advancement within the company?
- Is there anything else you need to know about me to be fully considered for this position?
- When will a decision be made?

Source: Nebraska Careers and Education



## INTERVIEWING WEBSITES

The Internet has an incredible amount of information to assist you in exploring career information, seeking employment and researching colleges or training programs. Remember that you can get free access to the Internet at your local public library, community college, or nearest NH Employment Security Resource Center. Listed below are some excellent websites:

[www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com) Quintessential Careers is the ultimate career, job and college site, offering expert career and job hunting advice, as well as links to all the best job sites. Special sections for teens, college students and all other job seekers (by industry, geography and job seeker type) make this site a comprehensive resource.

[www.careersandcolleges.com](http://www.careersandcolleges.com) Sponsored by the Careers and Colleges quarterly publication, in partnership with 30 quality organizations, this site covers the gamut of career and college information. This site hosts a virtual guidance counselor. Search for information by career or major, get tips for success once you're on the job, and much more.

[www.edonline.com](http://www.edonline.com) Sponsored by Education Online, this is a guide to college entrance preparation covering careers, colleges, financial aid, scholarships, admission tips, ACT/SAT, and features several self-evaluation checklists.

[www.embark.com](http://www.embark.com) Find the right college, graduate school, on-line learning program, and get recruited. This site also features an adult education guide for Lifelong Learning.

[www.careers.org](http://www.careers.org) This site is a directory of career directories.

[www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) Monster lists hundreds of thousands of jobs, and its Career Center features over 1,700 pages of targeted career advice for all levels and areas of employment.

[www.careermag.com](http://www.careermag.com) A comprehensive site with information and resources on every aspect of work for employers, workers, and job seekers. Features include Post-A-Resume, Post-A-Job, Employer Profiles, and daily Hot Topics.

[www.ajb.org](http://www.ajb.org) Highlights job openings listed with state employment service offices across the United States. Post resumes on the Talent Bank at no cost.

Source: Nebraska Careers and Education 2002 Publication